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LONGFORM INVESTIGATION

A Burdened Bon Appétit

Freeman '22 and Marin '25 offer an in-depth look into work experiences at Hamilton's dining halls. **pages 4-7**

FEATURES

Study Abroad

Talia Rosen '23 and Surya Gowda '23 reflect on their off-campus study during Spring 2022. **page 10-11**

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Men's Golf

Men's golf won the NESCAC Championship over this past weekend. **page 19**

The Spectator

Thursday, May 5, 2022

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Publishing the Truth, From Good Motives and For Justifiable Ends

The Center for Intersectional Feminism holds teach-in about reproductive rights

by Deanna Durben '25
NEWS EDITOR

On Wednesday, May 4 at 4 p.m., the Center for Intersectional Feminism (CIF) held a reproductive rights teach-in under the Dunham Green tent. Co-Chair Jhoana Flores '24 gave the opening remarks, explaining that the aim of this teach-in is "to create a more inclusive discussion regarding abortion and reproductive rights" and create a safe space for attendees to process recent events as well as to educate attendees. She and the rest of the CIF E-board, comprised of Co-Chair Lucy Naughton '24, Regina Lin '24, Phoebe Gray '25 and Hollis Mann '24, organized and planned the event.

The first speaker, Anna Skrobala '24 from the Gender and Sexuality Union, explained how overturning *Roe v. Wade* would have a disproportionately negative effect on the LGBTQ+ community while the privileged and wealthy would retain the ability to travel and receive abortions. She also pointed out how the terminology of abortion as a "women's right" is reductive and excludes other AFAB people such as transgender men and nonbinary and intersex people who could get pregnant.

College Chaplain Jeff McArn spoke on the clash over the value of life, with the life of an unborn child on one side and the life of the pregnant person on the other. Christianity has a long established patriarchal power system, wherein "men are allowed to distance themselves from the aftermath of a sexual encounter, while those forced to bear children are not." Some Christians interpret the biblical command to "go forth and bear fruit" as evidence of their pro-life stance, but he thinks it is time to focus on other commandments, such as treating fellow humans with respect.

McArn believes, despite some of its perceived harmful traditions, that there is still value in religion. He quoted bell hooks: "To open our hearts more fully to love's power and grace we must dare to acknowledge how little we know of love in both theory and practice." He believes that we shouldn't just think of the other side in dismissive stereotypes, but to trust in love, respect the dignity of all people and "put front and center those who are the most vulnerable."

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CENTER FOR INTERSECTIONAL FEMINISM

Hamilton students gather under Dunham Green tent for the reproductive rights teach-in.

Claire Tzouros '25, the co-chair of Hamilton's Planned Parenthood chapter, spoke about how the name of the "pro-life" movement is just "a cloak that hangs over an anti-reproductive, anti-sexual and health care movement" rooted in misogyny and the desire to control women's bodies. Tzouros reiterates that "being anti-reproductive rights is actually being anti-woman, anti-child, anti-health and anti-birthing people."

Tzouros pointed out how Indiana defunded five Planned Parenthood clinics, leaving 24,000 residents in Scott County (in which the clinic had not even offered abortion services) without access to essential health care or any HIV testing, which led to an HIV and opiod epidemic. The pro-life movement rarely supports the fostercare and adoption systems to help children after birth, while 22,800 women die annually as a result of unsafe abortions in places where they are banned.

Willa Karr '25, chapter co-chair, spoke about the importance of Planned Parenthood from a Hamilton student perspective. She emphasized that the establishment of a Planned Parenthood chapter means more than just accessing essential personal health services including STD/STI checks, contraception and sexual education. It means "joining a group of students across the country dedicated to fighting for reproductive justice." Hamilton

Story continued on page 2

such it is their duty to take action on behalf of those who have been historically denied support, such as the underprivileged, low-income refugee communities in nearby Utica and Rome. "We are fighting for our own futures, and the protection of our own rights," she said. Collaborating with Planned Parenthood gives student activists comprehensive resources and a concrete way forward.

CIF Co-chair Lucy Naughton '24 concluded the teach-in. "We gather here today to show our love and support for the many Hamilton community members who have felt hurt, scared, angry or unsafe as a result of the Rosary Club's messaging and the recent news coming out of the Supreme Court. Above all, we gather for the community members living in fear of their reproductive rights being stripped away in a matter of weeks. We see you, we are here for you." She urged people interested in a follow-up discussion to attend CIF's Tuesday, May 10, meeting at 8 p.m. in the DMC.

In an interview on Tuesday, Naughton said that "the original intention, before the *Roe v. Wade* news leaked, was really just to create a space for members of the community or LGBTQ+ people, or anyone who feels affected by the messaging the Rosary Club sent out…to process and let their emotions out." Flores remembers seeing the outcry on Jodel throughout the Hamilton community, and knowing that that messaging "would harm members of our community."

The Rosary Club was founded near the end of the Fall 2021 semester, and one of their first campus-wide emails stated that they "unapologetically stand for" the Sanctity of Life, a document that condemns abortion, euthanasia, and suicide as immoral. On Sunday, April 3, the club began a "springtime series of Sunday Rosaries…dedicated to the protection of the most innocent and vulnerable among us, the unborn." This Rosary for Life series, with its message of abortion being a "moral evil", has drawn controversy among Hamilton students.

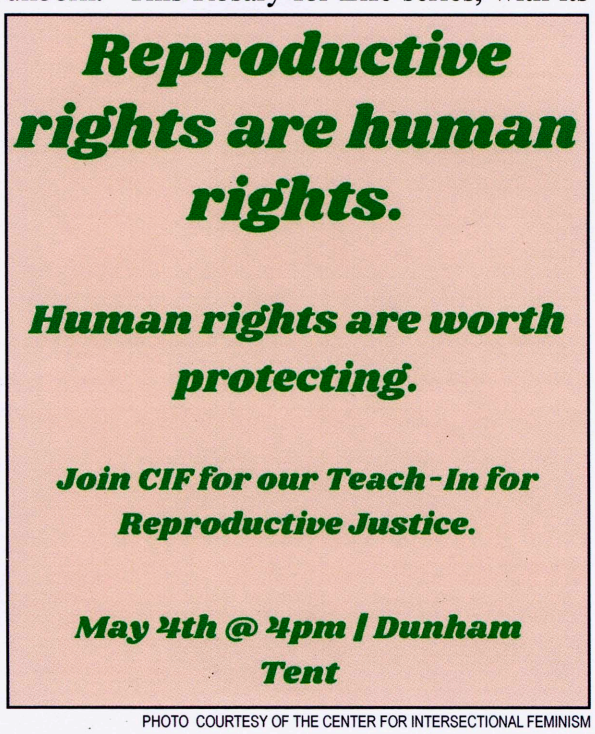
Reproductive rights are human rights.
Human rights are worth protecting.
Join CIF for our Teach-In for Reproductive Justice.
May 4th @ 4pm | Dunham Tent

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CENTER FOR INTERSECTIONAL FEMINISM

CIF Media Chair Hollis Mann '24 explained that while planning the teach-in, the E-board "made it a very intentional part of our process to make this a reproductive justice focused event supporting the people hurt by that rhetoric, and now, the shooting down of Roe, not just anti-Rosary [Club]." Naughton added that they were "trying to take advantage of that campus conversation and redirect it in a more positive way. We're not going to lie and say that we weren't motivated by the Rosary Club, but this is certainly not an attack on them, because the last thing we want to do is feed into that persecution complex."

Even before the Supreme Court document leak, Naughton says CIF was trying to connect the current on-campus issues and discussions with larger national ones, and the news has only heightened the importance of that. As Mann says, "the rhetoric being spewed by the rosary club is more of a symptom of a larger problem than the problem itself, and it would be a disservice to the larger problem at this point to focus on them."

CIF reached out to the chaplaincy, the Newman Council and the chair of the Religious Studies department to ensure a diversity of perspectives, and recieve input from experts. McArn's speech at the teach-in discussed the nuance of being religious and being pro-reproductive freedom. "There was a Rosary Club email with the subject heading 'Catholic is pro life', and that's not true," Mann said, "you can be pro-women's rights and pro-abortion in any form."

Naughton, a Religious Studies minor, said that a quote from her New Testament class has really stuck in her head: "The Bible doesn't speak unless someone speaks with it." This means that Christianity and religion is "just something that people interpret and connect to their own personal values." Flores, who was raised Catholic, notes that there should be a limit to this freedom of interpretation, however, and "there's a line when it becomes almost a form of hatred."

Flores says that the supportive response to CIF's email about the teach-in was overwhelming. Dewayne Martin '24, a Class of 2024 Student Assembly representative, called her at 11 p.m. on Monday, May 2, wanting to help. CIF and some members of SA as well as other activists on campus quickly got involved in the brainstorming, and they thought of having a walkout.

In an interview on Tuesday, May 2, Flores says the group "spent last night and this morning reaching out to colleges in any way we can: contacts, emails, even that one person from high school who goes to that school" as well as DMing feminist groups and student councils. "I remember being in class and all I could think about was the walkout," she said. Mann added that "We were all so upset and hurt by the news, but the energy in the room was palpable."

This effort culminated in a Zoom call with 21 colleges from 12 states to plan the walkout, less than 24 hours after the idea was sparked. The current list of participating colleges is: Hamilton College, Pomona College, Brown University, College of William & Mary, Denison University, Clark University, Amherst College, Connecticut College, University of Minnesota Twin Cities, Virginia Commonwealth University, Florida International University, Georgetown University, St. Olaf College, College of St. Benedict, Purdue University, Reed College, Virginia Tech, Wesleyan University, SUNY Polytechnic Institute, UC Berkeley and Middlebury College. More schools, including Yale University, Colby College, Bates College, Scripps College, Claremont McKenna College and Harvey Mudd College are getting involved as word spreads.

The Reproductive Freedom Protest (@rfprotest on Instagram), as they have named it, will happen on Thursday, May 5 at 5 p.m. As of this interview, it is still in the planning stages, but they want it to be a march through the school. Students are asked to wear green on Thursday, a color that has been associated with Planned Parenthood and protecting reproductive rights. Green was originally inspired by Latin American activists, and the protest is being held on Cinco de Mayo partly to pay homage to them.

Naughton gushed that "I didn't think I could get more grateful than I already was towards the rest of the CIF E-board and G-board for all the hard work they put into the teach-in, then I was grateful for the other student activists at Hamilton, and now, my heart is just full of love and gratitude for activists at colleges I've never been to and people I've never met. It's a really good feeling to have, to balance out the existential dread."

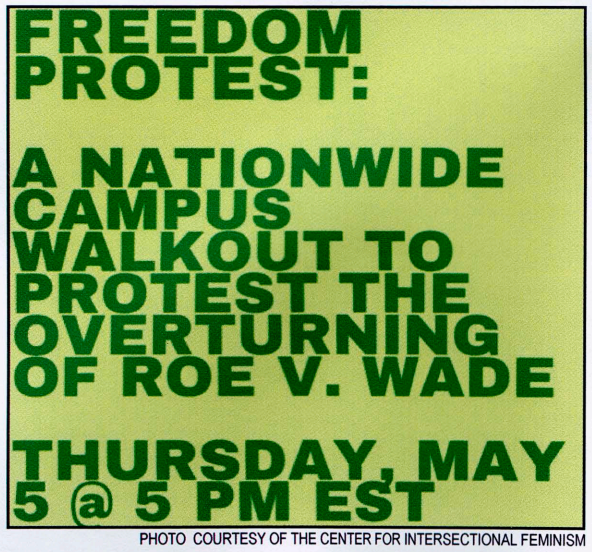

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CENTER FOR INTERSECTIONAL FEMINISM

May 5, 2022

Funada '23 and Han '22 to speak at 2022 Commencement and Senior Dinner

by Anoushka Aswin '25
NEWS EDITOR

As graduation for the Class of 2022 approaches, the Speaker Selection Committee has chosen Maya (Misaki) Funada '23 as the Commencement speaker, and Joseph Han '22 to speak at the Senior Dinner. The selection process involved nominations from fellow classmates, as well as an interview before the Committee. An email sent by the Speaker Selection Committee stated, "This was an incredibly difficult decision to make and we know every single nominee, semi-finalist, and finalist would have made an amazing speaker."

Funada is a part of the Class of 2023, and will be graduating next fall. They are an Anthropology major and an international student from Tokyo, Japan. Funada shared that at first, they did not even realize they had been nominated when they got the email notifying them. "I was way too busy organizing the library teach-in back then," said Funada, "I didn't even read the whole thing until I got a reminder from the selection committee."

Their surprise at being nominated quickly turned to a resolve to be chosen as the Commencement speaker. Funada said they were actively campaigning because they wanted to get a large platform on campus to talk about social justice issues.

Social justice at Hamilton and beyond the campus is the theme of Funada's speech. "I'm most excited about using Hamilton language to criticize Hamilton," Funada laughed.

With COVID-19 taking up a large portion of their college experience, Funada discussed a feeling of disconnect with others on campus. "I haven't ever felt fully, fully connected at this school. I'm an international student and a lot of the things that Hamilton mainstream culture has didn't really resonate with me. I still don't feel fully connected to the campus, but that kind of encouraged me to speak up for all these marginalized voices," Funada expressed. "Major Hamilton narratives tend to lean towards dominant groups and I really wanted to challenge that trend."

In response to what they will miss about Hamilton upon graduation, Funada replied, "the professors for sure." Funada talked about their experience away from the College, saying, "when I was working during my gap year, I realized how adults in the real world really don't care about us like professors here do … Life here is hard of course, but I still appreciate how supportive this Hamilton bubble is, relative to the real world."

If Funada could give younger people at Hamilton any advice, it would be to "question the dominant narrative, especially when it's coming from older people or those in power." Funada jokingly continued, "Maybe they should even question what I'm saying here!"

They speak about a Japanese Economics professor at Yale, who inspired their advice. "If you truly want to change something," Funada said taking a pause, "you shouldn't just follow what's commonly accepted today. If you follow what's already done, you're not going to really do anything extraordinary." Funada added that "it's okay to not follow the mainstream path … I struggled so much to accept who I really am, in fact until very recently."

Han will be speaking at the traditional Senior Dinner during Senior Week. Han is a History major who, after graduation, plans on teaching at an elementary charter school in the South Bronx where he grew up.

Han spoke about his speech, saying "I focused on the like, the brevity of it all. I definitely talked about how it felt being a POC here … I wanted to focus on like, 'yeah it's kind of sh*t, but at the same time, it's kind of funny.'"

Han said that he is "really excited to have the opportunity to speak to people that I've been with for so long." When asked what he will miss about Hamilton, Han laughed. "There were just a million little things that really bothered me, but the thing that I will miss a lot here is the people. I know that's so cliché. I like the feeling that I can walk through the Atrium and know people and feel like, 'Hey, I can talk to people.'"

"It's such a singular moment in my life that will never happen or align the way it did here, right here right now," he added.

When asked what he would like to see changed in Hamilton's future, Han said, "I think there's a really big inequality problem in this school … sometimes I just feel like in order to get accommodations or the bare minimum, I have to lay out my entire life story to someone … When you're in a conversation with administration, their question isn't 'why do you need this', it's 'why do you need this over other people.'"

Han expressed his sentiments about graduating: "I had one foot out the door at the beginning of the year. Girl, I'm ready to leave."

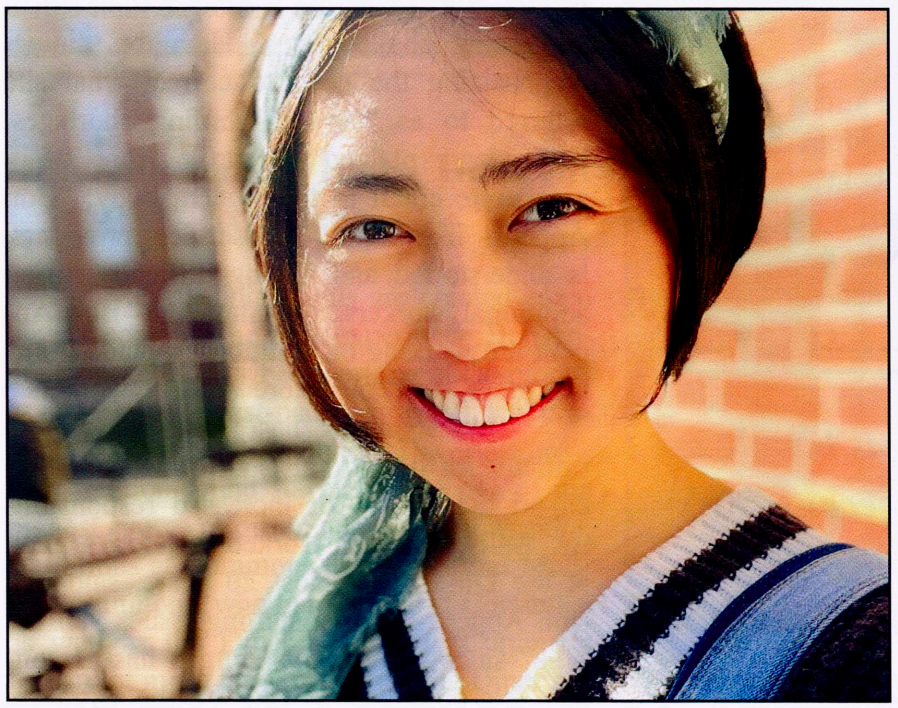

PHOTO COURTESY OF MAYA FUNADA '23

PHOTO BY CARSON HALABI '22

May 5, 2022

Understaffed and overworked: Bon Appétit employees struggle with COVID, staffing and pay

by Duncan Freeman '22
INVESTIGATIVE EDITOR
and Billy Marin '25
INVESTIGATIVE REPORTER

Students arriving at Hamilton in Fall 2020 found themselves on a campus with limited food options, an abundance of to-go boxes in the dining halls to encourage students to eat in their rooms or at tables set for one, and plexiglass dividers between each seat in Commons and McEwen. The Diner switched to a to-go system as well, shortening its hours and serving up El Guapo's via GrubHub orders.

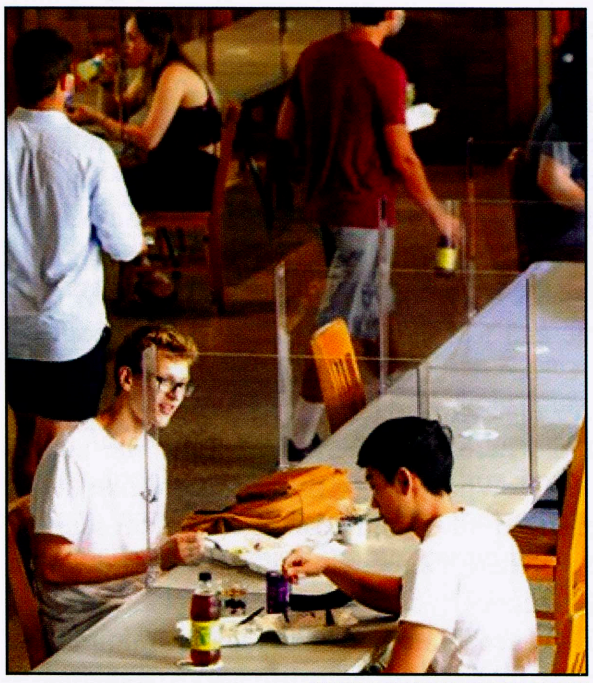

PHOTO COURTESY OF HAMILTON COLLEGE

Commons Dining Hall during the pandemic, complete with plexi-glass barriers.

By Fall 2021, Commons and McEwen had returned tables to their prior positions, the Diner's in-person ordering system had been restored and the Little Pub had reopened. However, understaffing presented a novel challenge that ballooned lines for food, angered students and staff and led to changes in recruitment and retention strategies within Bon Appétit, the company that supplies and staffs Hamilton's dining halls.

Bon Appétit's workers faced the brunt of these unprecedented changes and challenges, working more hours, changing their schedules and fulfilling new responsibilities to ensure that no student went hungry. "Things the last two years were very difficult. It was very hard for the students. I had kids crying because they weren't meeting people, and it was hard on us too…It was very hard to manage logistically," said Marge Petteys, a self-described "Hill Card checker" at Commons.

By Fall 2021, in response to the challenges wrought by the pandemic, Bon Appétit made a variety of policy changes. Lucy Burke, Director of Procurement and Administrative Services for Hamilton College, told *The Spectator*, "We developed a plan with the Bon Appétit leadership to increase the minimum wage, provide retention and sign-on bonuses and develop other innovative recruitment strategies."

These strategies included hiring many student workers, offering $1,500 bonuses for workers who stay three months and a "Thank-You Pay" bonus of $1,000 for all full-time employees working at Hamilton College. Despite these raises, Bon Appétit workers are still the lowest paid professional workers at Hamilton College with a minimum wage of $17. Custodians, employed directly by Hamilton College, generally make just over $21 an hour. In addition, since dining hall workers are contracted through Bon Appétit, they do not have access to certain benefits that Hamilton provides its service workers. Further, Hamilton's service workers, unlike Bon Appétit's dining hall employees, are represented by a union.

At the beginning of the Fall 2021 semester, Bon Appétit's workforce stood at 45 workers compared to the desired 110 and a minimum of 90 as described by General Manager Reuben Haag at a Student Assembly meeting in September 2021. The company's recruitment efforts eventually bore fruit, and the staffing levels rebounded to 90% of capacity by the end of the Fall semester. However, workers told *The Spectator* that staffing problems at Commons and the Diner persisted into Spring 2022, burdening workers with extra hours and stressful shifts.

"We're a little bit understaffed now," said Bryan Simmons, a line cook at the Diner. "People are still getting used to the idea of working as opposed to 'wait, no, I like my free money.' So we usually only have four people working as opposed to five." Even with the signing bonus, "people just quit," said Wally Kurgan, a manager at the Diner. "We had a couple of people close to [getting the bonus] and they just quit. They couldn't handle it…it's a hard job."

"The worst thing is having to work all the time because we're so short staffed"
- Wally Kurgan

Workers *The Spectator* interviewed detailed their two years working through a pandemic that cut staffing levels, changed menus, altered layouts of the dining halls, limited in-person interaction and continues to affect nearly every aspect of working for Bon Appétit at Hamilton College. Understaffing especially put stress on Hamilton's dining system, with workers at Commons, already a more challenging environment than both McEwen and the Diner, shouldering the burden.

One worker *The Spectator* reached out to initially wanted to comment but was told by Operations Director Lori Barone that it was against company policy to speak with student reporters. Barone did not respond to a request for comment. Reuben Haag, General Manager of Bon Appétit, despite reading and agreeing to answer *The Spectator*'s questions, ultimately did not provide any comment.

"We'll always be short-staffed, it's frustrating for the workers but it's always stressful for the managers and the supervisors"
- Marge Petteys

Staffing Challenges

At the beginning of the Fall 2021 semester, Burke sent out a campus-wide email addressing challenges to Hamilton dining, emphasizing the need to correct what she referred to as "severe" staffing shortages. Haag also explained this staffing shortage in a separate email to the student body: "Bon Appétit, like many foodservice providers, is understaffed and having difficulty hiring additional workers. Hamilton and Bon Appétit are working on solutions, including hiring more staff and more student workers."

Understaffing has made work more difficult for dining hall staff, who have taken on the burden of increased responsibility. Wally, who has worked for Bon Appétit at the Diner for almost 20 years, said that Bon Appétit has had staffing issues "all the time" since COVID-19. Kurgan has personally felt obligated to take on the extra responsibility caused by the lack of staff. "The

worst thing is having to work all the time because we're so short-staffed…some people think the job is too hard because they don't wanna work anymore," said Kurgan.

A Commons worker who requested to be anonymous for this story said that in the Fall semester, they needed two times as many dishwashers than were employed. Further, they said that often there would be only one dishwasher on shift when they needed at least three or four to do the job properly. Dishwashers at Commons, even when fully staffed, "do way more work than everyone else," said the anonymous Commons employee. Turnover for these positions is also incredibly high, multiple workers told *The Spectator*. "[Dishwashers] are the people who don't wanna stick around," said the anonymous Commons employee.

Petteys voiced similar concerns about staffing issues. "The lack of workers [makes it harder to work at Commons], but that's not because of Bon Appétit; it's because we can't find people. So we're being doubled up, and it does get stressful," she said. Petteys continued to say that while stress for workers was an issue, it was not the end of the world. "We'll always be short-staffed; it's frustrating for the workers, but it's always stressful for the managers and the supervisors. Us as workers, that's our job, and you might get frustrated, but we have to work through it. We can't be miserable about it; we have to do a good day's work."

Staffing issues resulted in personal stress for Bryan Simmons, who described having to work without enough staff to adequately handle the workload. "Remember the 18 inch snow day? Normally a staff member from Commons comes in [to the Diner] on their day off to help us, but they couldn't that day because they had to watch their kids. And another staff member called in [sick]. So it was me, another staff member and our manager on a Friday. I had 15 minutes to scarf down lunch in a 10.5 hour day…that was probably the worst time I've had here," Simmons described.

Different Dining Halls, Different Experiences

Not all dining halls are created equal when it comes to the work experience; Bon Appétit workers described working at Commons as more intense, fast-paced, stressful, and ultimately, as a more difficult job. *The Spectator*'s investigation found staffing to be one of the biggest causes of difference between working conditions at Commons, the Diner and McEwen. Simmons, who has worked at Commons as well as the Diner, said that "Commons feels a lot more fast-paced than the Diner because [the Diner] is a smaller establishment, so there are way more people who can fit in Commons." Omar Barghout '25, a student worker at McEwen, said "[Commons] does seem stressful—all the workers there seemed stressed." Bruce Sansone, who has worked at both the Diner and Commons, agreed. "Diner is more like let loose, Commons is more…a dining restaurant setting," Sansone said.

While the Diner and especially Commons felt staffing losses acutely, McEwen Hall did not. Jamie Morgan, a prep cook at McEwen, said that "we are the fullest staffed of all the buildings" and added that "when we were open for the weekends [in Spring 2021] we were short but [Fall 2021] was a little bit better."

At the start of the Fall 2021 semester, Burke noted in her schoolwide email that Bon Appétit would reduce staffing issues by hiring student workers. However, the vast majority of those student workers worked at McEwen, not Commons. The anonymous Commons worker said that they asked management, "why aren't we getting any students? I'm referring [students] to you all day long!" When asked why they thought student workers were being sent to McEwen instead of Commons, this worker said that "I was under the assumption that it's because [McEwen] would be a more enjoyable work environment…They wouldn't want to work in Commons, they absolutely wouldn't."

The notion of needing to protect student workers from Commons was echoed by Barghout, who has worked at McEwen since early Fall 2021. "Because Commons is where all the people who visit are… and it's more popular... they don't want students there messing up [Hamilton's] image or the food," said Barghout. "I know they're short over there, crazy at Commons," said Kurgan.

In addition to staffing issues, Commons workers deal with a more challenging physical layout. The Commons kitchen is located in the basement of the building, meaning that workers have to ride an elevator to bring food up to the dining hall itself. The elevator is known to break down, causing a headache for the already stressed workforce. The McEwen kitchen is directly next to the dining hall, making the process of cooking, preparing and serving a simple one.

Beyond the logistics, McEwen workers see their dining hall as a more pleasant environment to work in. Morgan, who has worked at McEwen since 2019, said that "we have a very nice view all day long," in contrast with Commons. He continued, saying "I think the staff here [at McEwen] is much happier with their jobs." Morgan also speculated that working at Commons is more difficult because "the volume at Commons is more…so there's more work to do [and] I think that might play a role…they definitely serve more students than we do."

> ***"If it's the [eleventh] largest employer in the world then why are we getting paid so bad? Are you not making enough money?"***
> ***- Anonymous Commons Worker***

"We have teamwork. That is the magic word," said Sylvia Castellar, who has worked at McEwen since 2018. Both Castellar and Morgan said they would not want to work at Com

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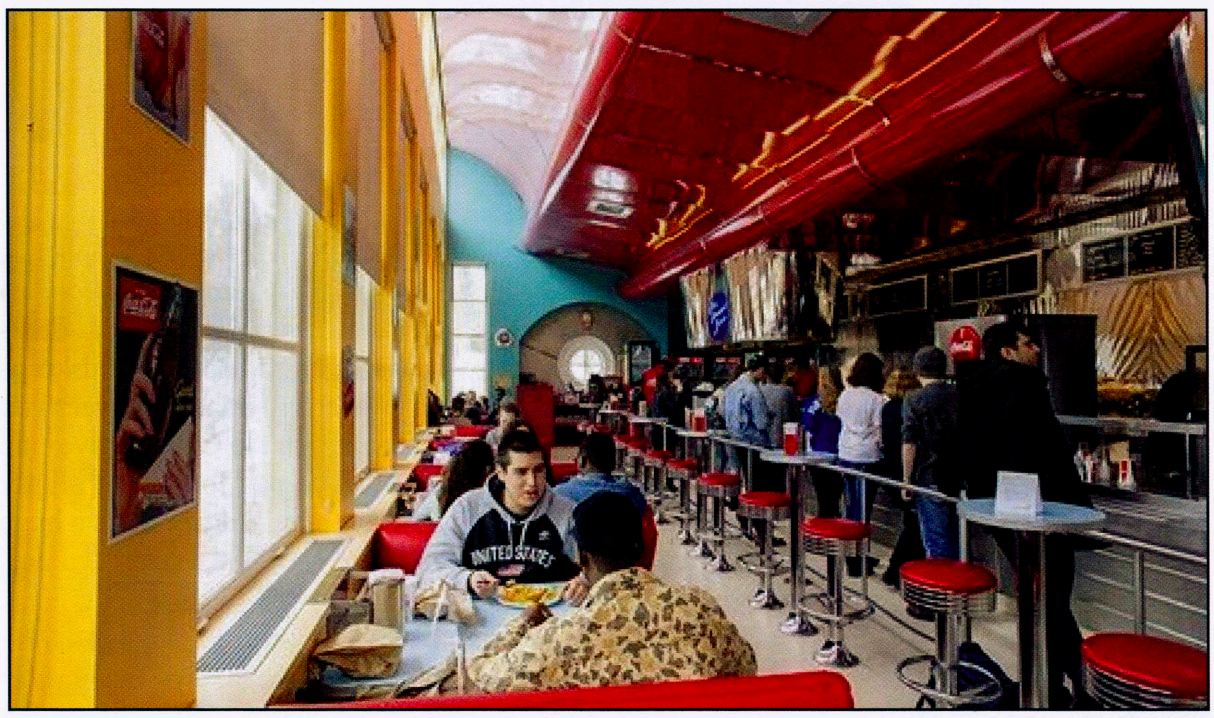

PHOTO COURTESY OF HAMILTON COLLEGE

The Howard Diner was closed in May of 2020 before transitioning to Grubhub-service which lasted from the fall of 2020 through the spring of 2021.

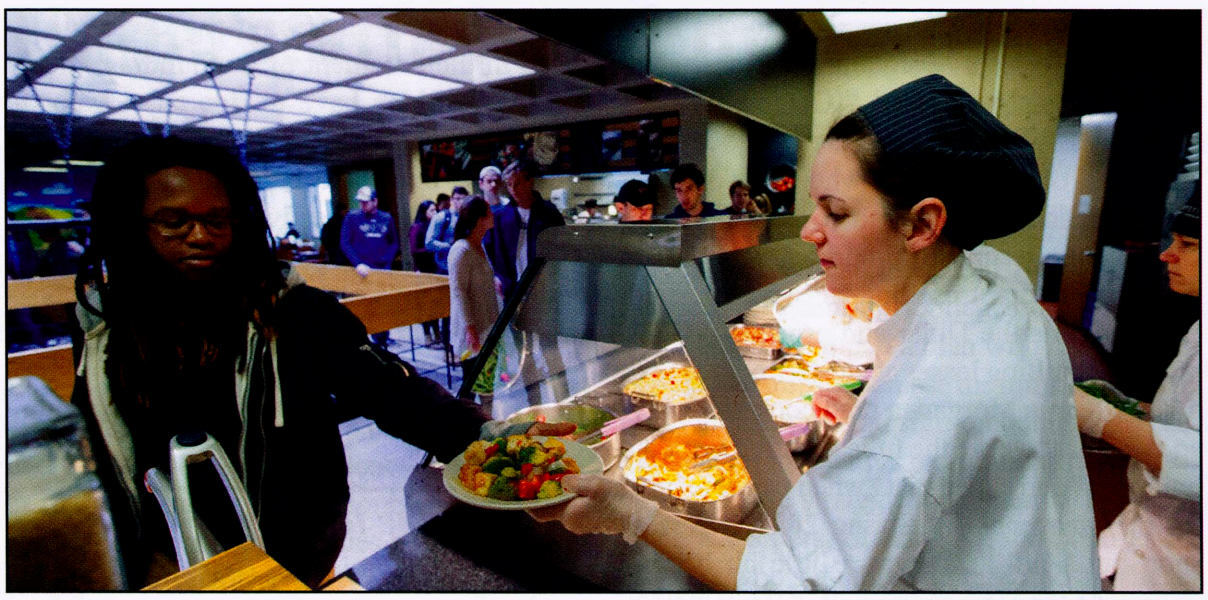

PHOTO COURTESY OF HAMILTON COLLEGE

Students stand in line at McEwen Hall during a typical Hamilton semester.

mons if their bosses asked them to move there.

The anonymous Commons worker said that in the past, management had denied their request to work at McEwen when they asked to move from Commons.

Opinions on Pay and Benefits

In Fall 2022, when understaffing was at its worst, Bon Appétit raised its minimum wage from $13 to $15 in the hopes of encouraging more applicants. The company also started a program that would award any new employee who worked for three months at Hamilton's dining halls a $1,500 bonus. In Spring 2022, Bon Appétit raised their minimum wage again to $17. Managers, who work alongside the line cooks and food servers, now make around $18.50 an hour. Despite these pay raises, Bon Appétit's rank-and-file employees and managers are still paid less hourly than Hamilton's lowest-paid employees: custodians, whose hourly rate was recently raised to just over $21.

Opinions on recent pay raises differed among various employees contacted by *The Spectator*. "Pay is fair. It's okay, but we don't even discuss it with the other workers because you just don't do that, and I think that's any profession," said Petteys. "It was very generous of them to raise base pay, because I never ever thought that they'd see where we're coming from…For what we're doing, I think we get paid pretty well," said Morgan with agreement from Castellar.

Others disagreed, saying wages only covered rising inflation and that it left workers in poverty: "[pay is] not really much different because prices went up," said Simmons. Wally said: "I get by fine…everybody wants to make more money. I don't really talk to anybody about it…I'm content…it is what it is," though he said that wages "could always be more, you know what I mean…if you're not making more than $25 an hour, you're still [in] poverty…it's 100% true." The anonymous Commons employee was "really unhappy," before their second raise in Spring 2022 and felt it was a big reason dishwashers and other positions experienced so much rapid turnover. "They expect this much outta [us] for this kinda money, yeah, you wouldn't stick around."

This worker blamed their low pay not on their managers or Bon Appétit as a company but on Compass Group, the international conglomerate that owns Bon Appétit and several other food catering services. The company website states that Compass, the eleventh largest employer in the world, "is a global leader in food services, providing delicious and nutritious meals to millions of people, every day, across 45 countries. On a statutory basis, the annual revenue for the Group for the financial year ended 30 September 2021 was £17.9 [$22.5] billion, delivering an operating profit of £545 [$686] million."

Compass groups' CEO Dominic Blakemore took home $4 million in compensation in 2021 according to the Economic Research Institute. "If it's the [eleventh] largest employer in the world, then why are we getting paid so bad? Are you not making enough money?" asked the anonymous Commons worker.

Since workers in Hamilton's dining halls are hired through a contractor (Bon Appétit), they are not officially Hamilton employees, so they miss out on some of the benefits that Hamilton employees like custodians, groundskeepers, painters and other essential employees get. "The biggest benefit that the College gives me is that they're going to pay for half of all my kids' college…that's a huge draw, that's a huge benefit," said Kevin Mojave, a custodian employed by Hamilton who works in McEwen.

Mojave, like the rest of Hamilton's essential workforce, is a member of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) that negotiates pay raises, benefits and any other contractual matters with Hamilton. Mojave loves the union and thinks that the protections SEIU provides him would "be an important help" for Bon Appétit workers. "We make more dough, we have a union and [Bon Appétit workers] don't get the benefits we do because they're on contract…dollars to donuts [working for] Hamilton is better." Custodians recived their most recent raise of $1.67 in Fall 2021 and now make just over $21 an hour.

"I've seriously contemplated stopping working for Bon Appétit and picking up garbage at your college," said the anonymous Commons employee, adding that they think not many Bon Appétit employees know that they make the least of any professional worker on campus. "We don't get any of the benefits that your janitors get, they make better pay than all of us, they get all the college benefits, and they only work 6:00 a.m–3:00 p.m.," said the employee who usually works 55 hours a week. "That means we have to do their job after 3:00 p.m. for less pay."

Kurgan expressed a different view, stating "we all have the option to go work [at Hamilton]…when there's a job opening for Hamilton anybody can apply… if you don't wanna be [in dining halls,] apply…there's a few job openings, and the Mail Center is hiring. If you don't like your job, there's a billion more out there."

COVID-19's Other Challenges

COVID-19 dramatically changed both Hamilton dining and the work-life of the dining staff. From staffing difficulties to changing menus, dining hall staff bore the brunt of the chaotic situation.

The Diner was closed in May 2020 before transitioning to Grubhub-service in Fall 2020 through Spring 2021. The transition was not easy, with some students not picking up meals that they had ordered and staff being overwhelmed with the amount of food that needed to be fried given the new menu. Kurgan described how Bon Appétit had to replace the four-burner stove in the Diner's kitchen with two gargantuan fryers in order to cater to all the french fries and chicken.

"You guys are awesome. Literally, the only reason I enjoy my job for shitty pay" - Anonymous Commons Worker

"Grubhub was nuts: every time you put an order in, another one came. It was nonstop. It was crazy," said Kurgan. COVID-19 itself also presented a stressor to dining hall workers. "We were worried about losing the employees that we had [to contracting COVID-19] because we had so few," Wally continued. Going back to a regular menu with the Diner's traditional service was easier compared to the stress and chaos of Grubhub, according to Wally. Burke echoed similar thoughts in a campus-wide email sent out on Aug. 17, 2021, when she said "we know that grab-and-go dining last year was not your favorite experience (nor ours), in addition to the unfortunate but necessary packaging waste it generated. We're happy to announce that a mostly traditional style service is returning to campus this fall."

Masks also presented issues for workers because of the challenges with communication they created. "The masks are awful. When we're taking orders, it's so hard to hear with the mask and plexiglass," Morgan said. Plexiglass was installed in all dining halls in the Spring 2020 as a protective measure against COVID-19, exacerbating the hearing difficulties that came with masking. The plexiglass and masks are both still present in dining halls. These difficulties also affected the capacity for the dining staff to interact with students. "We always try to chat and get to know the students we see every day, and you just can't hear half the time," said Morgan.

"When they come in and go 'Hi Marge,' or anytime they remember my name, that means so much to me, it means more to me than if you gave me a million dollars."
- Marge Petteys

Workers and administrators expressed that despite logistical challenges, their efforts were worth it. "Because I started just a short time before the pandemic, it feels as though I've been operating in the COVID-19 environment right from the start. It has been a challenging two years, but by always putting students' needs first, we always find a way to persevere," said Burke. Others added that these challenges were for the good of the community: "it was very hard to manage logistically. We didn't just have to sanitize—we had to do other processes, but it was for the good! So we just sucked it up and did it!" said Petteys.

Students and Other Benefits

One aspect of working in Hamilton's dining halls that nearly all the workers interviewed by *The Spectator* agreed upon was that interacting with students makes their jobs far better. "That's the only reason I stay working here. You guys are awesome. Literally, the only reason I enjoy my job for shitty pay," said the anonymous employee. "I have a really good rapport with all of you guys…I'm usually pretty friendly and it reflected well on me," they continued.

Petteys said, "When they come in and go 'Hi Marge', or anytime they remember my name, that means so much to me. It means more to me than if you gave me a million dollars." Morgan, who mans the omelet station during McEwen breakfast, said "the students are great…we try to get to know all the students that come in every day…we see you every day so we might as well get to know each other."

"It's mostly interacting with you guys that's the cool part. Everyone's from everywhere," said Kurgan. Several Bon Appétit workers also said that students are far more respectful than customers that employees dealt with in prior jobs, "Everybody knows everybody because you see them every day…you guys understand how busy we are," said Wally, joking that customers would "shoot you" if you messed up a McDonald's order. "Respect goes a long way. When you kids show it, we feel it," said Marge. "It makes me feel like my son's here," Sansone said. He continued, "I'm looking forward to my own son getting to college so he can have the same feeling that you guys get when you walk in the dining halls."

Simmons said he preferred his job at the Diner over the other food service jobs he had worked in the past: "My Dunkin' manager wasn't great, and the coworkers weren't great either." Morgan had a similar feeling. "I like it here…this is the only kitchen I've worked in that's been buffet style…this is the only one where we don't have to pay for food… we can eat whatever we want." Despite their critiques of Bon Appétit, the anonymous employee preferred it to their prior job as well: "This is way more professional…sexism, and sex talk, saying inappropriate things are not tolerated."

Another perk that comes with working in Hamilton's dining halls is time off during breaks between semesters. "That's the biggest perk of this job, in my opinion, is the time off," said Morgan.

Kurgan said that he loves not working in the summer because it enables him to be a "full-time dad." He uses the break to hang out with his two young kids, bask in the sun and work on old cars in his friends' garage. His typical shift runs from 3:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. at the Diner five days a week, so he can usually only see his kids in the early morning when they leave for school. Sansone agreed, "I think that it's really fun getting the summer off. I get to spend it with my kids. It makes me feel young again…even if I'm not!" he joked.

Just before the publishing of this article, Kurgan and three other employees working at the Diner tested positive for COVID-19, once again leaving the Diner understaffed. "I can't believe it," said Kurgan.

These positive tests forced Bon Appétit management to forgo the Diner's evening shift and close the dining hall at 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 3. "We're pretty fucked… They can't run [The Diner] without workers," lamented Kurgan. "We got nobody left."

PHOTO COURTESY OF HAMILTON COLLEGE

A student grabs a meal from one of the buffet style stations in Commons.

Dear Members of the Hamilton Community,

Hang in there right now. We are at that critical time when it seems as though there is so much to look forward to, yet so much left to accomplish. We hope everyone is able to find moments to enjoy themselves and take in all that is special about these last couple of weeks in the year.

As this is the final issue of *The Spectator* for the 2021-2022 academic year, we would like to take this opportunity to thank our extraordinary staff for their tireless efforts in ensuring that every voice within our community is heard and that every issue is carefully covered. In particular, we would like to offer our sincerest gratitude toward the seniors on our editorial board: Emma Mae Regan, Claire Goldstein, Catherine McFarland, Sam Dils, Katherine Kim, Duncan Freeman, Abbie Wolff and Mukund Jarayam. We are deeply appreciative of the impact that each of you has had on our community, and we wish you all the best in your future endeavors.

Finally, thank you to every Hamilton student, faculty member, employee, administrator, parent and alum who has supported us throughout this semester and throughout the year. It has been our privilege to share and spread the word on a spectacularly eventful year.

We hope you and your families have a wonderful summer, and we wish you all safe travels as you depart, some for the last time, from our tremendous community.

With many thanks,
Eric and Emma Mae

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Celebrating 175 years, we were first published as The Radiator *in 1847.*

The Spectator's Letter to the Editor section is designed to be a forum for the entire Hamilton community to discuss and debate campus, local, national, and global issues. Pieces published in the section express the opinion of the individual writers and are not necessarily the opinions of *The Spectator*, its editors or the Media Board.

Letters to the Editor are welcome from all students, alumni/ae, faculty, friends of the college, and Hamilton community members.

The Spectator has the following policies for submission:

1. Submissions are due by 10:00 p.m. on the Monday before publication. The editors reserve the right to refuse any late submissions.
2. Letters should be no longer than 500 words. The editors reserve the right to cut off letters at 500 words.
3. Letters submitted anonymously will not be printed.
4. *The Spectator* reserves the right not to publish any letter it deems inappropriate for publication.
5. If a piece is determined to be libelous, an unwarranted invasion of privacy, or an unnecessary and/or unwarranted ad hominem or personal attack, it will not be published.

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May 5, 2022

Letter to the Editor: a message from Editor-in-Chief Emma Mae Regan '22

Dear members of the Hamilton community,

Volume 63, Number 26 of *The Spectator* marks my final issue as Editor-in-Chief of the paper. Amongst the other "lasts" that I will soon experience as a spring-semester senior, this is one of the toughest goodbyes. I have had a wonderful experience working at *The Spectator*. However, it is through our news coverage and investigative efforts that I have learned the severity of certain problems that exist at Hamilton.

When I was a senior in high school, I wasn't sure where I wanted to go, but I knew that wherever I ended up, I wanted to write for the school newspaper. I still remember opening my virtual acceptance letter from Hamilton, seeing the confetti and getting so excited because my high school and camp friends who had gone to Hamilton before me spoke so highly of it.

However, since being at Hamilton, I have found that the way the school markets itself is far different than its realities.

I am appalled at the way that physical and mental health is treated here. Even before I came to Hamilton, I was wary about the school's approach to health because of a presentation that my high school held on college life. When we reached the section on mental health, my high school explicitly cited Hamilton as an example of a college that responds poorly to mental health. In particular, they talked about the recent cases of suicide that have happened at this school. At the time, I dismissed that presentation, thinking that the recency and severity of these cases would have scared Hamilton enough into making drastic changes in its health programs.

However, I was wrong. I've been lucky, as I've only had minor issues with health at Hamilton. First, I was not able to see my therapist frequently, with the demand for therapists at Hamilton making many students (including me) wait two to three weeks for each appointment. Second, despite being on top of my vaccines and being extra careful socially due to the rise in cases on-campus, I recently got COVID-19 for the first time. Even though I had a "mild" strain of the virus, Hamilton should have been more diligent in testing students before and after their return from Spring Break, as COVID-19 is still physically and mentally horrible for anyone who gets it, and that spike in cases put our entire community, especially immunocompromised members, in a risky position. Additionally, there is now a chance that my family will not be able to attend my graduation in person because the spike puts my family, particularly my mom (who is immunocompromised due to her current battle with cancer), at risk of getting COVID-19.

Despite my "luck," several students have had worse experiences with the Health Center, as *The Spectator* demonstrated in its several articles on the consequences of the center's low capacity. In lieu of treating all patients, the Health Center will "sort" students by severity: if you are not "sick enough," you should just stay home and take an Advil; if you are "too sick," you should go to the hospital. If your mental health is "not too bad," you should just wait several weeks for a therapist, but if your mental health is "too severe," you should go to the hospital or just leave school indeterminately. As Julia Dupuis '21 demonstrated in their Spring 2021 longform investigation article for *The Spectator*, students who try fixing their health themselves risk getting worse, while those who go to the local emergency rooms or hospitals risk maltreatment, harassment and abuse. I am glad that the Health Center is hiring more staff, but with a $1.47 billion endowment, is there really no "wiggle room" to hire a larger variety of staff, improve the Health Center's resources and programs and/or pay Health Center staff more to incentivize them to stay longer? If there is really no "wiggle room," then can we change the culture surrounding health at this school? Don't get me wrong, I love programming such Food Truck Fridays and Goat Yoga, but those activities do not change the fact that many students are stressed, anxious, tired and depressed because this college fosters a culture of competition and overworking so that it can appear rigorous and prestigious amongst its peer institutions.

Besides health, I am also devastated and angered that some members of our community think that they can direct ableist, classist, fatphobic, homophobic, racist, sexist and xenophobic actions and behavior towards their peers.

I am specifically speaking to the cowards that hide behind the anonymity of Jodel and make awful comments that they would not have the bravery to make in person.

I am directly speaking to Rosary Club. You go to websites outside of Hamilton and frame yourself as a victim, yet you abuse the campus-wide listserv as a means of directing hate and prejudice towards groups just because you don't identify with them? How dare you tell me how to treat my body, when it is not your own? How dare you tell members of the LGBTQIA+ community that they should not marry, when it is not your union? How dare you claim that you believe in the "sanctity" of life while you promote policies and ideologies that endanger the lives of so many?

Most of all, I am speaking to everyone who is complicit in allowing these actions and behaviors to happen, particularly the administration. Yes, you may not have explicitly acted or behaved in these ways. However, when you say you view these actions and behaviors as a problem, but then turn a blind eye to students, faculty, and staff who are victims of and report these problems, and then you fail to do anything concrete to fix them, then what does that mean about Hamilton's morals and values? Why does Hamilton not do more to condemn on-campus individuals and groups that perpetuate these problematic actions and behaviors, and off-campus groups like the Alexander Hamilton Institute (AHI) and *The Enquiry* that support them? Why do we protect institutions like Greek life that not only have a history of these actions and behaviors, but have a track record of sexual harassment and assault? Why do we not do more to protect students of color, female and nonbinary students, LGBTQIA+ students, disabled students, international multilingual students and any students that represent a marginalized community on campus? Why do we not better protect faculty and staff who are also part of these marginalized communities?

I acknowledge that this letter only scratches the surface. I am frustrated that no matter how many articles *The Spectator* writes, no matter how many emails students send or meetings we have with administrators about these issues, no matter the number of protests and marches the student body has condemning the problems, it seems as if no one listens to us. Just because we are students, that does not mean that our complaints are invalid, or that we are too "immature" to know what we are talking about. Our voices, our complaints, our problems matter. If there's one thing that I hope readers, especially the administration, gets out of this letter, it is that all of these issues are serious, and we need to take more concrete steps to actually fix them.

Despite these problems, I am incredibly grateful for all of the relationships and positive experiences that I have had at Hamilton. I would like to thank my current and former advisors (Robert Knight, Erica DeBruin, Joseph Mwantuali, Martine Guyot-Bender, Alan Cafruny and Claire Mouflard); the strong and passionate group of girls from the Women's Club Soccer team; my smart and creative classmates from the Career Center; and of course, all of the talented and thoughtful writers, editors and photographers that I have ever worked with at *The Spectator*. Specifically, I wanted to thank Claire, Cole and Eric for serving as co-editors with me. I enjoyed and learned so much from each and every one of you, and I wish the best of luck to Cole and Eric this fall. Finally, I would like to thank my family and Hamilton friends for supporting and believing in me these past four years. Thank you all so much for bringing joy and purpose to my time at Hamilton.

With care,

Emma Mae

Copenhagen: hygge, happiness and health

by Talia Rosen '23
PRODUCTION EDITOR

It's been almost four months. I'm sitting at a cafe in Copenhagen, Denmark right now reflecting back on my semester and getting ready to pack up my apartment and return to the U.S. Soon I will be back at Hamilton for my senior fall. There will be snow, late nights in a KJ study room and long lines at Diner. It might seem like I never left; my semester abroad feels distant, and I feel at home again already. Yet, I am bound to compare and reflect. Studying abroad has made the stark differences between living in a city and going to Hamilton quite clear.

I have loved Copenhagen — it's probably my favorite city in Europe. It's manageable, safe and clean. Everyone is a rule-follower (like me!) and would never dare to jay-walk. The public transport is timely and people do not engage in small talk on the bus. Danes keep to themselves, but not in a rude way. They love to have fun, drink and eat with their friends. They just have an understanding and trust between one another that no one wants to talk or give everyone fake smiles on the 8:00 a.m. metro ride during rush hour. I mean, who would blame them?

And the weather! I expected cold; I know cold; we all know cold in Central New York. I wasn't surprised to arrive mid January to Denmark's capital and find myself covering up in multiple layers, hats and gloves each day. That was just life at Hamilton. Of course I hoped for a slightly better spring and my wishes have kind of come true! April began with a bit more sun, and the days are only getting longer. Northern Europe means the sun stays out until 9:00 or 10:00 p.m. It's the beginning of May, and I think I walked around today without a jacket for the first time this semester. The little victories I suppose.

Being so far from home has certainly opened my eyes. This sounds cheesy, I know. Yet, it's true. I don't just mean it's taught me about a different culture (which it has), but it has made me aware of what I need and want in a personal, social and academic sense. I am at a program with 1500 students (mostly American students who are current juniors at their home universities), and am learning from teachers who spend most of their time researching or working. Teaching is usually their side gig. Now this is not a bad thing; that is not what I am saying. Simply put, it means they are incredibly passionate about their work and want to share their knowledge with others. My sociology teacher travels on the weekend to do research, while my design professor is a renowned architect. They are truly living. I'm also not saying that professors at Hamilton don't love the topics they are teaching or have an intense love for their field of study. I am sure most of them do. But it's a different way of learning for the student. It's just a change.

I am not the biggest fan of change. I can't say I'm a "go with the flow" type of girl. However, this semester has made me deal with drastic shifts. I moved to a foreign country with a new language, a new culture and a new way of existing. Walking into that grocery

PHOTO COURTESY OF TALIA ROSEN '23

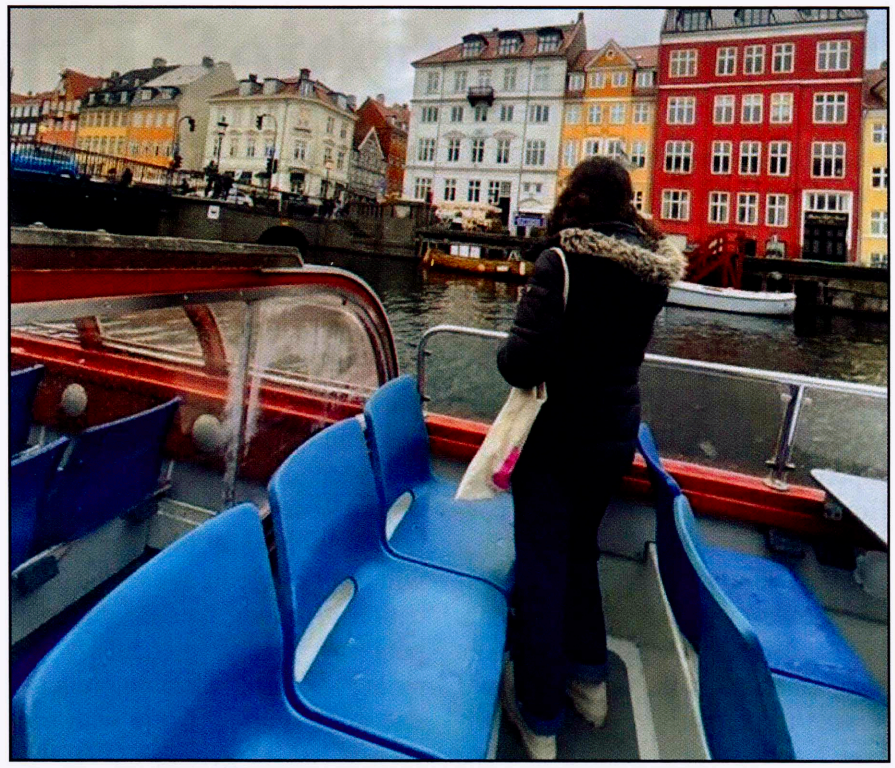


PHOTO COURTESY OF TALIA ROSEN '23

store the first day after my bags got lost in Frankfurt, Germany and I needed to have any sort of fuel in my body, I came face-to-face with aisles of products in an incomprehensible language. Applesin was orange. Hygge was pronounced "Hoo-guh." Where was I? I felt that change, that shift in my environment. I wasn't in Clinton anymore.

But by embracing the newness, it led to growth. I realized how much I loved seeing my friends on Martin's Way outside rather than walking into a bar and not recognizing a single soul. I understood my desire for a small, tight-knit liberal arts community and professors that pushed you to become better writers. There was something about driving past Groad and into the world of cows and cornfields that I adored. My time in Copenhagen hasn't just allowed me to learn what I miss and love about Hamilton; I also realized new things I wanted to incorporate into my life.

For starters, hygge should be added to your vocabulary if it has not been already. Pronounced 'hue-guh,' it's a Danish word that doesn't have a clear definition, but describes a feeling or place that is seemingly cozy, warm or special, sipping hot chocolate by the fire, making dinner with friends or board game night. So keeping a sense of hygge in mind (always), I hope to return to the U.S. and continue making a cup of tea each night or getting together with friends for a potluck. It makes the day exponentially better. Danes know what they are doing in this sense.

In terms of my Danish academics, I certainly want to continue my studies with graphic design. Each student here is enrolled in a core course in which they spend most of their time in, and it's sort of like one's "homebase." My class of eight students has been one of the best parts of my experience, and we got the opportunity to travel to western Denmark and the Netherlands to learn about design. I want to incorporate my knowledge of American art studies with Danish and Dutch art. The philosophies are drastically different; they focus on simplicity and rationality here rather than aesthetic. Artwork should have purpose. I love that mentality and plan to incorporate this attitude in my studies and thesis for senior year.

As I mentioned, the semester is coming to a close. I have taken certain lessons away; some of which you have read here, but there are too many to write or some I haven't even considered yet. Continuing to think back on the past months, the multitude of 'newness' has certainly made me excited to return to life on the Hill — Diner B, avoiding the map on Martin's Way, and running from KJ to the Science Center in ten minutes — all of it.

Abroad changed me (for the second time)

by Surya Gowda '23
PRODUCTION EDITOR

If I were to use one word to describe my college experience, typical would not be it. Coming onto Hamilton's campus as a January admit, or colloquially a Jan, I began my introduction to my first year at college in a big city, thousands of miles away from where I expected to be. To go abroad again, after only spending four semesters on campus as a junior, was a decision I did not take lightly. As my second semester abroad comes to an end, I have no regrets about my choice to leave again.

While I was touring colleges, one of the biggest aspects I looked for was a good study abroad program. I could already picture myself, three years into college, exploring Europe and appreciating my time at my host school. Instead, fresh out of high school, I was suddenly in London, for the second time ever, moving into the Princess Elizabeth House in Highgate. There was nothing to really prepare for being 18 years old and suddenly alone in a new city, making my own meals and trying to make friends.

My Jan semester is a semester I would not give up for the world. It was the semester where I finally became comfortable with being on my own and accepting that you cannot control everything that comes your way. I learned how to adapt and how to finally be responsible for myself. I visited places I would never have dreamt of visiting at such a young age, learning how to navigate unknown places. While other kids in my grade were navigating freshman year on campus, I was navigating the Tube and the streets of London.

When I got back to campus, I knew I was going to leave again. It is not that I did not want to have as much time at Hamilton as I could, which sometimes I think I wish I had, it was that my junior abroad experience was something I had dreamed of ever since the first day I started thinking about college. To me, my Jan semester was not a real abroad experience. Even though I was away from campus, I did not know what college really was. It felt like a gap semester, where I could explore my interests in a place untouched by where I was going. I used London as a base for travel, leaving most weekends to see as much of Europe I could, not completely integrating into the culture or communities around me.

This semester has been almost the opposite of that. I decided to come to Stockholm almost a year in advance of my projected abroad semester. I remember seeing the posters for the Swedish Program pasted all over the bulletin boards of KJ and instantly knowing

PHOTO COURTESY OF SURYA GOWDA '23

Surya Gowda '23 stuntin' on the Tunnelbana during her commute.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SURYA GOWDA '23

A panoramic view of Stockholm, which is the capital of Sweden.

that was what I wanted. I knew nothing about Scandinavia or what it had to offer besides a good prison system, the movie Midsommar and long, cold, dark winter days. Now, putting all of those things together, moving to Stockholm for almost four months does not seem very enticing. But the concept of having no idea what to expect was exciting.

Stockholm superseded all of my expectations for what a study abroad semester could be. Unlike London, where I would say I studied, I feel like I can say I lived in Stockholm. Where there was the crowded and loud Tube, there was the quiet and spaced out Tunnelbana, and where there were classic scones, there were sweet kanelbulle. The city has the perfect balance of metropolitan, historical, natural and artistic influences that made it feel like home.

However, I would have to say my biggest improvement since being abroad freshman fall was how much more integrated with the city and other students I was.

While in London, we studied in a building only designated for students enrolled at the Arcardia University of Global Studies. In Stockholm, we were in the same building as all of the other Stockholm School of Economics or Handelshögskolan students. Even if we were not taking all of our classes with them, every morning or afternoon, I would walk into the main atrium and be surrounded by Scandinavians dressed in semi-casual business attire.

My Jan life gave me the stepping stones to adapt to another semester abroad fairly easily. Unlike many of my peers on the program, I knew what to expect being in a foreign city far away from home. But even with an idea of what was ahead, Stockholm made sure to surprise me. The city holds the longest public art gallery in the world with every single Tunnelbana stop richly decorated with different themes by artists in a way I had never seen before.

Studying abroad twice in Europe gave me the opportunity to enjoy one place instead of jet-setting city to city every weekend. Studying in pre-Brexit London enabled me to get brief travel out of my system and allowed me to soak in Swedish culture and livelihood to its fullest. My first two months in Sweden were spent living a quotidian Scandinavian life and eating Fika every day.

As I begin packing my bags and looking towards my senior year, this semester has given me the opportunity to see what is to come after I graduate. Though a daunting thought, studying abroad again made me appreciate the little time I have had at Hamilton. London gave me a foundation of independence, but Stockholm gave me the opportunity to experience that independence in its fullest form.

The Bachelors

Catherine McFarland '22

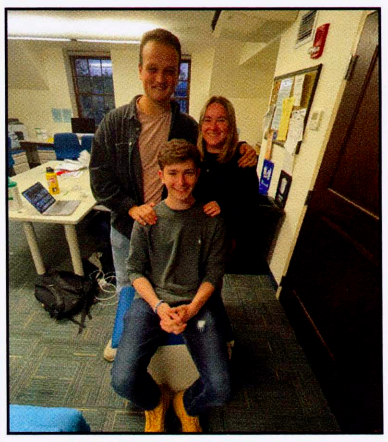


PHOTO COURTSEY OF CATHERINE MCFARLAND '22

Pronouns: she/her/hers.
Hometown: Narberth, PA.
Home on Campus: KJ Atrium.
Major: Economics w/ classical languages minor.
Turn on? New Zealand accents.
Turn off? Pseudo-intellectuals.
If you were a dorm, which would you be and why? The suites this year, because I am a darkside gentrifier.
If you had to describe yourself as the love child of any two musicians, who would you pick and why? Taylor Swift & Jack Antonoff.
What advertising slogan best describes your life? All the news that's fit to print.
What TV genre best describes you? HGTV. I'm a student with unreasonable expectations and no budget.
What's your type? https://athletics.hamilton.edu/sports/mens-cross-country/roster.
What are three things you cannot live without? Attention, manifestation, and Goldfish.
If you were any social space, what would it be? The Spec Office.
If you could join one group on campus, what would it be? The Varsity Squash Team <3.
What's your Patronus and why? A rat = self-explanatory.
If you could break one rule at Hamilton and get away with it, which would you choose? Drinking in a vacant freshman dorm room.
What would you give a thumbs up? Old Jodel.
What would you give a thumbs down? New Jodel.
Who would you say is your campus crush? CH '23.
Who would you say is your faculty crush? Professor of Classics Emeritus Shelley Haley.
What would your perfect date be? I don't have a car but I would go to Popeyes.
What is the weirdest thing currently in your room? A landline that can only call Lila Kirchhoff.
If you could remake the points system, what would be the number one offense? Being an AA orientation leader.
If you were a food, which would you be and why? Garlic, because it's horrible on its own, but so involved in everything.
Lights on or lights off? With this overhead lighting?
Favorite campus study spot? KJ Atrium, duh.
What's the last lie you told? I'm working on my thesis.
What was your first thought this morning? Slay.
Which member of Disney royalty are you? Anna from Frozen (see: Maddy McFarland).
Which American historical figure are you attracted to and why? A young Rutherford B. Hayes because he's hot.

Duncan Freeman '22

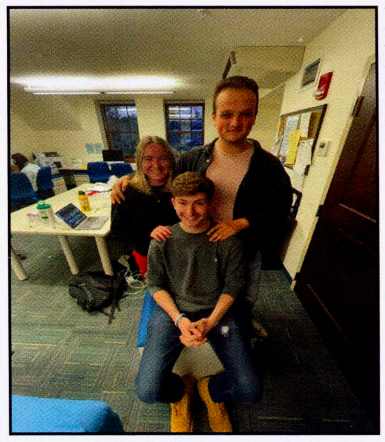


PHOTO COURTSEY OF DUNCAN FREEMAN '22

Pronouns: He/Him/His.
Hometown: New York, NY.
Home on Campus: Milftank.
Major: History.
Turn on? Labor Unions.
Turn off? Soft Pants.
If you were a dorm which would you be and why? Dunham, because I'm at the center of everything.
If you had to describe yourself as the love child of any two musicians, who would you pick and why? Steely Dan and W U N N A.
What advertising slogan best describes your life? It looks like chocolate chip cookies. And it tastes like them too! But it's a breakfast cereal!!!!!!!
What TV genre best describes you? Nostalgic Dark Comedy.
What's the best pick-up line you've ever used/had used on you? I'm going to Hannafords later, want me to grab you anything?
What's your type? Based individuals.
What are three things you cannot live without? Chocolate Pretzel Nugos, Loose fitting button down shirts and Tommy Keith.
If you were any social space, what would it be? The annex (never forget what they took from us).
Where do you go when you want to be alone? That Victorian room in Root with all the paintings.
If you could join one group on campus, what would it be? Boffers.
If you could break one rule at Hamilton and get away with it, which would you choose? Drinking in a vacant freshman dorm room.
What would you give a thumbs up? Unorthodox Darkside suite parties.
What would you give a thumbs down? Walking slowly on Martin's Way.
Who would you say is your campus crush? Kevin Mojave.
Who would you say is your faculty crush? Usman Hamid.
What would your perfect date be? Let me drive ur car to Popeyes and Puff N' Stuff.
What is the weirdest thing currently in your room? A stuffed Platypus.
If you could remake the points system, what would be the number one offense? Cancelling senior pub for the entire spring semester.
If you were a food, which would you be and why? Marshmallows cuz im sweet af and mad fluffy.
Lights on or lights off? Gimmie that second setting of a tri-bulb lamp plz.
Favorite campus study spot? UALREADYKNOWKJATRIUM.
What's the last lie you told? I'm ready to graduate.
What was your first thought this morning? Damn my head hurt.
What's the meaning of life? Just Do It.
Which member of Disney royalty are you? I'm the genie from Aladdin, no cap.

May 5, 2022

Why cancel culture is not a problem

by Abraham Ortiz '25
STAFF WRITER

The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution guarantees one's freedom to express themselves without legal repercussion from the government. It is a simple enough notion, yet people across the country cannot seem to understand the implications of their individual freedoms. Yes, you can say whatever you want, and you can offend and lampoon whomever you want. The government will not send agents to your door to take you off to prison for your views. This freedom, however, will not protect you from the court of public opinion. This elusive and all-powerful court will smite you down from whatever high horse you have placed yourself on quicker than you can say "God damn you, cancel culture."

The topic at hand is this ill-understood 'cancel culture.' Does it exist? Yes. Is it a good thing? It depends on whether or not you value accountability. Does a celebrity's homophobic tweet from 2011 resurfacing make you question their professionalism and their future employment? Is their apology reactive and performative? Of course it is; but do they deserve to have their career ruined for something they did so long ago? It is tricky and very contextual, and there is no end-all be-all formula for resolving situations like these. As always, the court of public opinion will find its way to deal with the situation, accordingly or not. As we have seen time and time again, people avoid accountability for things far worse than a bigoted message. The question at hand, then, seems to be whether or not "cancel culture" is being applied fairly. Additionally, will it ever be respected as a last resort for justice when the judiciary system fails?

For example, take Donald Trump. What is there to say about him that has not been said already? Well, a lot, considering we will hear about him until the day he utters his last "China." If we hone in on his banning from Twitter specifically, we can see every facet of the 'cancel culture' machine at play. There are his loyal followers, who to this day will claim that we are headed into a communist autocracy for the complete loss of free speech on display. There are his critics, who argue that Twitter as a private company can ban whoever they want so long as there is reasonable cause in their terms of use. Then there are the centrists, who in my experience say that they disagree with what Trump says, but still think he should have a platform; I will not argue with them, because I believe the argument will go nowhere. Let us analyze this ugly beast of a situation. A person with as much influence as the President of the United States wields power with their words alone. Consider the January 6 Capitol riot, during which

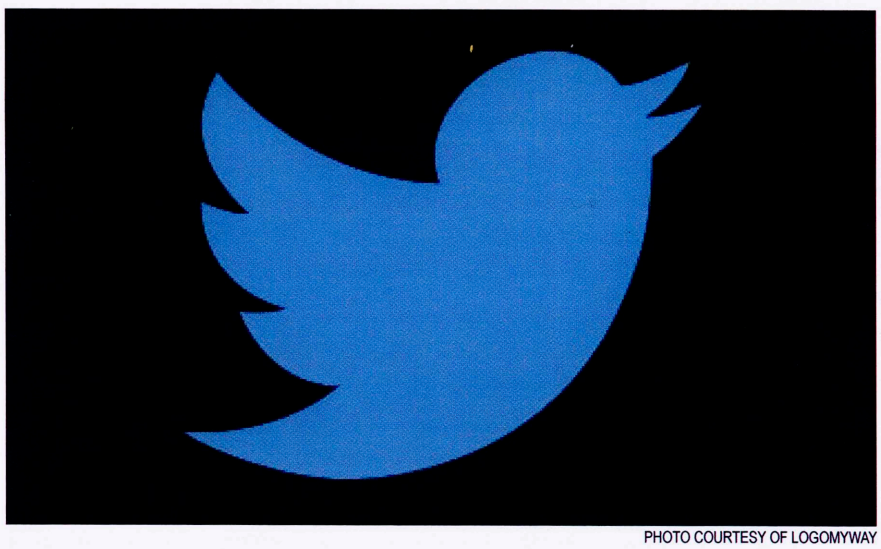


PHOTO COURTESY OF LOGOMYWAY

The social media network Twitter has come under fire for banning former President Donald Trump's account after the Capitol riots.

PHOTO COURTESY OF NBCNEWS

Former President Trump has demanded that his Twitter account be reinstated, and has even attempted to create alternative social media sites.

powerful and strategic rhetoric inspired hundreds of people to commit domestic terrorism for reasons the rioters do not fully understand. All people need is an emotional grievance and a target against which to commit atrocities. Twitter, where a person like the President can send persuasive messages hourly to millions of people, is a new prospective propaganda machine. A private company like Twitter then, within reason, should analyze the damage being done and deal with it accordingly. I will not discuss the dangerous direction this unspoken power held by powerful private companies is going in because that is a topic too big for me to unravel. The question I pose is this: do Twitter's actions count as cancel culture? I would venture to say it is not. This is not a degradation of free speech because, the last time I checked, our individual freedoms are not wholly contingent on the Twitter terms of service.

Twitter's ban of Trump is an example of a person being (partially) silenced by way of a decision by a private company. What about ordinary people like you and me? It might not be too crazy to claim that our power to hold powerful people accountable for their actions is one of the most crucial powers we have left. The President is not above the law, yet history has proven that people in that position and others of similar importance are not on the same playing field as you and me. Using freedom of speech to condemn people who openly proclaim messages of bigotry and sow the seeds of political and cultural polarization is imperative in the current climate. That being said, why is it that the people crying about this so-called cancel culture are almost always the wealthy and powerful? Consider the regular citizens parroting these messages about cancel culture; their ideas are not coming from their own critical analysis. These people are simply regurgitating what the latest angry and loud news reporter has claimed about cancel culture affecting their lives. They do not feel canceled by the government or president, but by their fellow neighbors. It is another form of powerful rhetoric used by pundits to misdirect the anger of the working class. The term 'cancel culture' was created by powerful individuals to cushion themselves from the backlash of their actions—ones that often should be condemned, but are not. At the end of the day, realizing where your beliefs come from and why you direct your anger towards certain people is the most important step to making a difference. No, an organization firing an individual for a horrible thing they did that has resurfaced due to public outcry is not 'cancel culture'—it is called accountability.

Top 10 study spaces on campus, part 1

by Tristan Sollecito '24
STAFF WRITER

One of the many great things about Hamilton is its vibrant academic culture, with hundreds of young and brilliant minds hungry for knowledge and intellectual prosperity. There are few sights more inspiring than a packed KJ balcony filled with students hard at work, putting their cerebral gifts on display as they put the finishing touches on their problem set, the final footnotes on their research paper, or enhance their creative spirit as they scroll through their TikTok feed. Because the academic juices flow at such a high rate at Hamilton, I have often found myself a part of heated debates surrounding the workspace options on campus. It has become clear to me that many Hamilton students suffer from a severe and disturbing lack of study space education, as some of their preferences have been nothing short of preposterous. I have elected to share my list in an effort to bring to light some of the study spaces that are flying under the radar, and I also intend on reaching a campus-wide conclusion on the pecking order of homework habitation. I know this is the opinion section, but it would be a stretch to call this an opinion; rather, this is a definitive list of the top ten places to study at Hamilton. I am going to be as specific and holistic as possible; not an inch of this campus is safe from my evaluation. I fear that I may be giving away some valuable information in this list, but I feel like I owe it to those lost souls that have yet to figure it out. Unfortunately, I do not have enough space in one article to flesh out the full list, so I am going to restrict myself to honorable mentions through number eight, but be on the lookout for the top seven next semester. Here is part one of the top ten study spaces on campus.

Honorable mentions:

CJ, Third Floor, Nook Outside QSR Center

In these honorable mentions, I shall note some popular or interesting options that just have too many flaws to crack the top ten. The CJ third floor nook is certainly an interesting proposition. I vividly remember watching the Yankees-Red Sox wild card game at its small circular table. It is a very nice spot to pretend to do work. One major issue with the nook, however, is its unusual warmth. I am not generally particular about temperature, but it was noticeably steamy during my time there. My experience was possibly marred because the Yanks lost, but overall, it was not a particularly comfortable option.

Library, Third Floor, Balcony

This spot is way too quiet; it takes me five minutes to unzip my bag because it feels as if any sound louder than a pin drop would get me caught from across the floor. Some consider it ideal for absolute focus when required, but I disagree. The eerie silence, zero ability to talk to people and the feeling of walking on eggshells make me not a fan.

KJ, Atrium

I figure this would be one of the more controversial takes on this list, but the KJ lobby just does not quite do it for me. It is a great spot for talking to friends, sure, but let us face the truth: no work is getting done whatsoever. Why not take the conversation elsewhere to avoid being distracted by the prospect of you potentially doing your work? It feels like the place to go when you want to feel productive without being productive. There is some value there, but at that point, I say one should just 'take the L' and go elsewhere so that you no longer have to pretend to be busy.

The list:

10. Commons, South Side Balcony

I now proceed to the main event: the list proper. This spot is unique, but like I said, every spot has to be considered. The obvious primary positive here is the access to food, which—if you have read my previous articles or have ever spoken to me for more than 10 seconds—is unsurprisingly a benefit which I value very highly. It does admittedly take a big hit in the distraction department. There is no chance this would be a good choice with any sort of approaching deadline, but it is a solid overall option.

9. Library, Second Floor, Group Tables

I have always wondered why the study tables are so seldom utilized. To me, the individual desks in the library feel uncomfortably lonely. The study tables provide a great balance of privacy and quiet without feeling too isolated. However, it can be an awkward spot depending on the time of day, especially with lots of people walking around; they can be kind of intimidating with books in every direction. It is also worth mentioning that the library closes at midnight, which is less than ideal.

8. Alumni Gym, Lobby

This is a huge 'dark horse' option right here. This area is very quiet but also spacious. It is not desolate, either; there is some foot traffic to remind you that other human beings exist, unlike some of the other options to come. It even checks the box for comfortable seating. Its big downsides, however, are the limitations on the type of work you can do. Without a flat surface for writing, humanities are often exclusively the subjects one can get done there, but overall it is still great for talking to friends and usually comfortable.

To be continued…

PHOTO COURTESY OF HAMILTON COLLEGE

A group of Hamilton students study in the lobby of the Kirner-Johnson building, a particularly popular place for some of them to gather.

2022 Senior Thesis Exhibition opens in Wellin

by Lily Rizzoli '24
A&E EDITOR

On May 5, the Wellin Museum will open its doors for "Closing Remarks", the 2022 senior thesis exhibition. The show features 16 Hamilton College senior art majors: Emma Berry, Katrina Colby, Erin Ebert, Sarah Ferdinand, Claire Goldstein, Jesse Gross, Emerson Chengzuo Guo, Charlie Dov Schon Guterman, Malik Irish, Madeline Lawson, Emily Le, Satchel McLaughlin, Valeria Ruiz, Ellie Silk, Chad Varney and Piper-Claudia Williams.

The Spectator's Claire Goldstein spoke about how much the space means for the students: "I am so happy to share this gallery space with these incredible artists. It's been such an incredible experience to see how everyone's projects have progressed over the year. Everyone has worked so hard and I am so excited for everyone to see the work that went into this." The students are extremely excited to have such a concrete gallery space, as for two years now, the COVID-19 pandemic has created barriers that have made it difficult for seniors to present their theses in public spaces.

The exhibit does not have an overlying theme, so the young artists were able to focus their installations on any topic they liked. Goldstein focused hers on her experience living with ADHD. "My thesis is an installation made up of posters and pages of my notebooks. I wanted to take an introspective look into my life with ADHD and how it makes me who I am. It's mostly just feelings I have and then I drew pictures of it. That sounds kinda silly but yeah."

The exhibition is open to the public. "Closing Remarks" opens on May 5, with a reception that takes place from 4:00-6:00 p.m.

PHOTO COURTESY OF HAMILTON COLLEGE

The Ruth & Elmer Wellin Museum of Art will house "Closing Remarks."

Videogame Review: *Batman: Arkham Knight*

by Jason Le '23
STAFF WRITER

"This is how the Batman died" is the opening line to Rocksteady's finale to the Arkham series. *Batman: Arkham Knight* (2015), released four years after *Batman: Arkham City* (2011), closes the chapter on eighth generation consoles. *Arkham Knight* expands to City's open world by allowing the player free reign to explore Gotham. With Gotham City finally opening up, Rocksteady has also introduced the Batmobile for players to explore and experience new action sequences.

Months after the events of *Arkham City*, Batman is struggling to come to terms with what happened in the aforementioned game. On Halloween night, Scarecrow releases a fear toxin that encapsulates a part of Gotham City, warning that he will eventually release the toxin all over the city, triggering a city-wide evacuation. Alongside Scarecrow, Batman meets a new foe, the Arkham Knight, a mysterious soldier seeking revenge on Batman. Along the way, Batman has to deal with familiar faces in the Rogues Gallery: Two-Face, Riddler, Deathstroke, Professor Pyg and Penguin and Hush, just to name a few.

Batman: Arkham Knight takes everything that made *Arkham City* a fan favorite and refines it to perfection. The combat mechanics are still simple. You have a button to attack, counter, stun and dodge. Combining these moves allows you to create combos necessary to take out specific enemies and maintain a perfect free flow. As you progress through the game and pick up new gadgets, Batman can include them in combat. In addition to the new combat mode is tag-teaming. In some story sequences, Batman is able to team up with Nightwing and Catwoman to defeat enemies. Both these characters have different fighting styles and combos against all of their enemies. Alternating between Catwoman or Nightwing will also lead to satisfying finishers.

Predator mode is still as good as it was in *Batman: Arkham City* with new changes that perfect it. With a new suit, Batman is able to move at great speeds and perform a fear-multi takedown that will take out up to five enemies in an instant. This ability recharges after performing a silent takedown, but is lost if Batman is caught during a stealth sequence. This new feature adds an interesting twist to predator mode, making you feel more like Batman. Like combat mode, predator mode adds a tag-team sequence where you can team up with Robin and take down enemies together.

However, the newest, and by far the most talked about, addition to the Arkham series is the Batmobile. The Batmobile demolishes everything it touches with cannons and sentry guns. Unfortunately, with great power comes great annoyance. Although the Batmobile makes the game definitely more interesting, Rocksteady could not help but shove it into half of the story. There are also many tank battles, most of which become tedious after a while, Riddler missions that require extensive Batmobile racing and puzzles that require you to bring the Batmobile everywhere. Although the Batmobile took away some of the charm that made *Arkham City*, it did not completely ruin the game.

Arkham Knight introduces new combat maps, such as the GCPD, Clock Tower and Crime Alley, where you can practice your free flow skills and interact with other characters. Some maps have even included a tag-team mode where Batman can team up with Robin or Nightwing. Rocksteady has also introduced specific modes such as enemy waves, where enemies are defeated in waves, or perfect free flow where players must maintain a perfect combo. *Arkham Knight* also features new predator maps that incorporate tag-team mode introduced in the main campaign. Additionally, for a fee or a season pass, players can explore stories with Batgirl, Red Hood, Robin, Harley Quinn and Nightwing. All of these characters are playable in both combat and predator mode. As a bonus, Rocksteady has also introduced Azrael as a playable character.

Overall, *Batman: Arkham Knight* is an excellent finisher to the Arkham series. Taking everything that made the Arkham series iconic, *Batman: Arkham Knight* perfects the formula and closes this franchise with a blaze of glory. The standard edition of *Arkham Knight* is available on PC, PlayStation 4 and the Xbox One for $19.99.

The best albums and artists of 2022 thus far

by Matthew Collins '24
OPINION EDITOR

While full albums of high quality were in short supply during much of the second half of the 2010s, the new decade has seen a wonderful variety of records breathe new life into music. Although Arcade Fire and Kendrick Lamar have already announced their comeback records, with supergroup The Smile similarly revealing an upcoming debut LP, a whole host of artists both old and new have already strode into the spotlight this year.

Hip-hop newcomers and veterans alike have started the year in great form. Pusha T's comeback after the excellent *Daytona* sees the former Clipse member deliver more husky bars and rekindle his chief lyrical inspirations of crime films and cocaine, aided by some compelling—if disjointed—production courtesy of frequent collaborators Pharrell and Kanye West. Earl Sweatshirt's *SICK!* fails to reach the heights of his magnum opus *Some Rap Songs*, but the former wunderkind still delivers some mesmerizing tunes and sounds more optimistic than ever.

Earl's record is an indicator of trends among the hip-hop underground towards abstract styles of communication and beatless production. Cities Aviv's *Man Plays the Horn* is the apex of his career thus far, a jazzy, spaced-out commentary on American poverty with wonderful replay value. Even more impressive is Billy Woods' *Aethiopes*, a veritable thesis statement for modern abstract hip-hop. As its grimy production sets a suitably dark atmosphere, Woods makes his most compelling case yet for being the finest current lyricist in hip-hop. His socially conscious bars are packed with biting observation and vivid imagery on tracks such as the jaw-dropping "Remorseless."

Hip-hop's auspicious vitality has been reciprocated in the more inventive corners of pop music. Singaporean art pop musician Yeule's aptly-titled sophomore effort *Glitch Princess* is an intense treatise on personal identity and the meaning of being 'human' funneled through layered synths and cold industrial beats. However, after years of disappointment and unimaginativeness, indie music has also been the nexus of thrilling music this year, as its phoenixlike rise continues with giddy abandon.

Indie veterans have returned to the fold in stunning form. The well-paced, exotica-tinged *Time Skiffs* is Animal Collective's finest record in over a decade; the group revitalized their sound without rehashing the territory that made them one of the finest musical acts of the 2000s. Spiritualized are perhaps the even bigger shock, especially considering the rumors that Jason Pierce had led his band into retirement. *Everything Was Beautiful* sticks to the same themes of romanticism, religion and recreational drugs that have defined the Spaceman's lyricism since the 1980s, and yet his latest offering remains just as deliriously engaging as some of his finest material—all to the customary tune of reverb-heavy guitars, chaotic saxophone and a gospel choir.

The foreboding double album, once a rarity in some indie circles, has been the format of choice for some of 2022's most impressive albums. Big Thief's latest record, the incredible and ridiculously consistent *Dragon New Warm Mountain I Believe in You*, sets a new standard for modern folk-rock. Adrienne Lenker's lyrical proficiency has shone through on the band's and her own previous releases, but on tracks such as the down-to-earth "Spud Infinity" and the ebullient "Simulation Swarm," she cements herself as one of the greatest and most compelling songwriters of the 21st century. The warmth of Buck Meek's guitar and the gentle rhythm section of Max Oleartchik and James Krivchenia provide the perfect backdrop for these passionate hymns, neither overpowering nor wilting in the face of Lenker's vocals. While not quite as much of an overarching statement, Beach House's colossal *Once Twice Melody* summarizes the duo's career as reinventors of dream pop in a four-part odyssey of guitar, synthesizer and Victoria Legrand's gorgeously hazy vocals.

Post-punk band Fontaines D.C. has been one of Ireland's most exciting groups of late alongside acts such as the irrepressible Gilla Band. While distinct from the post-punk sister scene developing in the United Kingdom (U.K.), early Fontaines still included in largely traditional post-punk instrumental palettes to complement Grian Chatten's incisive sprechgesang. However, their new record *Skinty Fia* witnesses the five-piece develop a strong musical identity—gothic rock tinged with Madchester and dream pop—befitting of their obvious gifts; Chatten delivers some of his finest-ever lyrics, always clever and often biting without descending into cynicism.

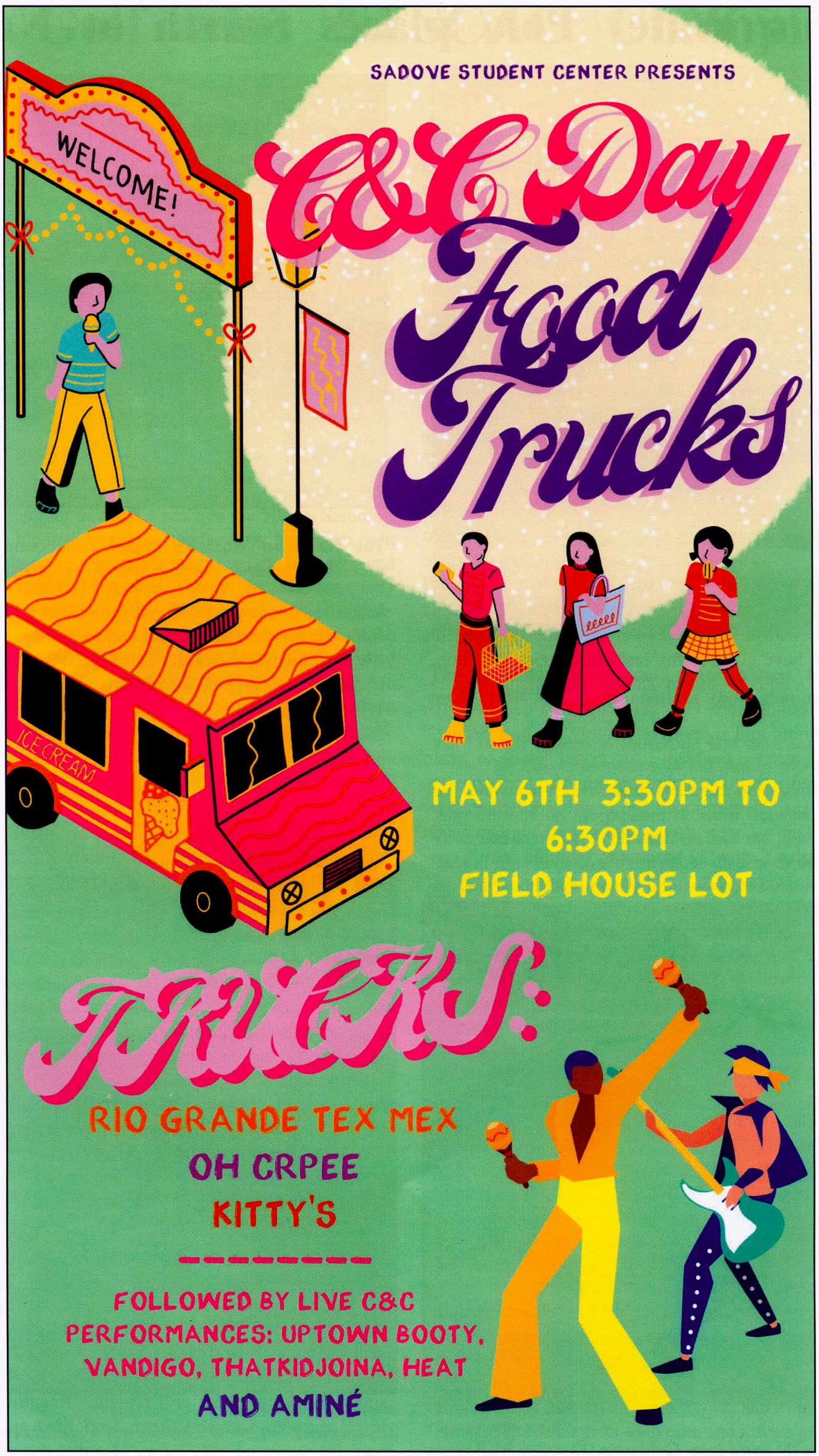
The aforementioned sister scene in the U.K., as it so happens, is ground zero for some of the most exciting new music on the planet. While groups such as the Leeds group Yard Act have already delivered serviceable, shrewd post-punk this year—listen to the witty and astute "Tall Poppies" to gather your bearings—the South London venue The Windmill is the unquestionable nexus of British creative inspiration. The fecundity of the Windmill scene is unmatched in the present day, with new, exciting bands crawling out of the woodwork with thrilling regularity. While Black Midi's hotly-anticipated third album is expected to drop in the summer, even the scene's lesser-known acts release quality records with little to no warning; Tenderhost's debut EP *The Tin*, for example, is a succinct statement of compellingly dark and mysterious jazz-rock.

One of the more surprising records of the year comes from Deathcrash, whose debut LP *Return* is full of chrome melancholy and stirring catharsis. The fingerprints of Slint and Low cover several of these songs, but the group manages to establish a personality of its own without submerging into hero-worship. Their subtle understanding of dynamics creates sprawling post-rock epics and two-minute ragers alike, with each represented in the record's two brightest lights; "American Metal" is an ode to slowcore that finishes with a euphoric crescendo, and the Weezer-referencing "Wrestle with Jimmy" delivers a burst of incendiary emo that lays waste to Return's entire first half in a blast of distortion. Caroline's self-titled debut is a thrilling combination of Welsh avant-folk and post-rock, recorded with charming warmth and intimacy. Hypnotic opener "Dark Blue" sets the stage against heartbeat drums as Casper Hughes unabashedly reveals the nature of his ambition, and "IWR"—a track recorded as softly as possible to allow its stringed instruments to shine—pulses with unmatchable vibrancy.

The last album to discuss is Black Country, New Road's sophomore record, *Ants from Up There*. The sheer abundance of buzz this album has generated in the music world is especially rare; there is little left for me to say that has not already been stated with astonishing passion and eloquence. I shall be brief: *Ants* is monumental, a decade-defining epic worthy of every bit of the staggering praise heaped upon it since its release. It is gorgeously orchestrated and emotional beyond belief, redefining modern indie in its own image. If you listen to one record this year, let it be this one; it may be early to name one's album of the year, but *Ants* might just be the album of our generation.

PHOTO COURTESY OF iNEWS

Above stands Black Country, New Road, an English rock band.



FLYER COURTESY OF STUDENT ACTIVITIES/SADOVE STUDENT CENTER

Women's Water Polo places fourth at Nationals

by Owen Lewis '24
SPORTS EDITOR

On May 1, the Hamilton Women's Water Polo Team finished fourth in the Division III Collegiate Club Championship. Not only is fourth in the country an incredible achievement, but this season was the first for the women's water polo team. They have gotten very good very quickly, which is quite a feat because water polo is an exhausting sport. The athletes have to constantly tread water during play, in addition to swimming up and down the pool to get into position and lifting their arms out of the water to throw the ball with force. A 2011 *Bleacher Report* article by Chris Siddell deemed water polo the most difficult sport in the world for its many physical demands. "For me, the toughest part of water polo is the stamina you need to keep up. It's a lot of swimming," said Sabrina Broderick '24. "You really need to pour your whole heart into the game to do well, but it is so worth it and so fun."

This season has been a challenge for many reasons. As captain SJ Bennett '22 put it, "We didn't have a pool for half our season [due to renovations] and COVID brought with it unforeseen circumstances." Nevertheless, the team banded together to make the best of a tricky situation. "We persevered," Bennett said. "I am proud of each and every one of us for the work we put in and the growth we experienced, and I am so glad for the meaning this team and this sport have given to my last semester at Hamilton."

Other team members shared similar sentiments with respect to the team's atmosphere. Georgia Brown '25 described the spirit as "so welcoming and supportive. Simply the best people." Hannah Budner '23 credited the team's successful season to "team bonding that fostered important chemistry, honesty, and communication." Edward Ha '25 mentioned the team's resilience: "our team persevered when we were down, and stayed vigilant when we had a lead." Katrina Colby '22 brought to light the team's constant desire to improve: "everyone on our team is eager to learn from one another. At practice and even during games, we're always asking questions and helping each other out. We've really taken every loss we've had this season and learned from it." With this spirit and a lot of hard work, the team found themselves at nationals. "It was insane getting to play teams from all over the country. We really didn't know what to expect going into it either since we spent most of our season playing D1 teams from Pennsylvania," said Katrina Colby '22. "So we went in with an open mind and an intention to have fun no matter the outcome, and we definitely did that. As a senior, it was definitely one of the highlights of my time at Hamilton."

PHOTO COURTESY OF SABRINA BRODERICK '24

The Hamilton Women's Water Polo Team celebrates their successful season, placing fourth at Division III nationals.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SABRINA BRODERICK '24

Captains SJ Bennett '22 and Claire Goldstein '22 pose with flowers.

The team lost a close battle to Middlebury in the third place game at nationals, 12-8. On the whole, though, the season has been a huge triumph. "I am so proud of our team for going [to nationals] and playing some great water polo," said Broderick '24.

The sky is the limit for future seasons. Water polo is one of the lower-profile sports on campus, being club rather than varsity, but the team's success is nearly unrivaled among Hamilton sports this semester. The team's experience will continue to grow. At some point, the renovations on the pool will inevitably conclude, allowing the team to practice at home. This year's success will likely generate further interest in the sport.

Though captains Bennett '22 and Goldstein '22 are set to graduate, those who remain on the team have a strong base from which to build. "Every single person on this team cares and looks out for one another and I am so happy to have been able to be a part of this lovely group of people," Broderick '24 reflected. "I came to the water polo team from a varsity sport at Hamilton, and I never imagined I'd find myself in a pool by senior year," said Colby '22. She and captains Bennett '22 and Goldstein '22 might be graduating this year, but there is confidence that the supportive atmosphere will remain. "Regardless of experience level, everyone is eager to learn, work hard, and leave it all in the pool for one another," Colby '22 noted. Long may it continue.

Men's Golf wins NESCAC Championship

by Sam Dils '22
SPORTS EDITOR

It's not every day that a NESCAC Champion comes to Clinton, New York. That all changed this past weekend, when the Hamilton men's golf team finished atop the ten-team field in the two-day championship tournament at the Yahnundasis Golf Club in New Hartford to earn its first team NESCAC title since 2003.

In Saturday's first round, the five-man team of Billy Geach '23, Jacob Zeng '24, Jack McKeon '22, Jack Habeeb '22 and Will Whitaker '25 teed off in the early groups and were able to amass an eight-stroke lead over the rest of the competition with a combined score of 300 (+16) between the top four golfers. As the later groups trickled in, it became clear that the Continentals would be in contention for the team title as they led some of the favorites coming into the competition, Tufts, Amherst and Middlebury, by eight strokes.

Geach, playing in the number three position, put up an impressive even-par round of 71 behind a whopping six birdies, launching him to an outright individual lead after one round of play. Each of the team's top four notched a score in the 70s on Saturday.

Coming into the final round on Sunday, they picked up right where they left off, dropping very few strokes over the front nine and expanding the team lead to 18 strokes. Though the lead eventually tightened on the tricky back nine, they had built enough of a cushion to cruise to a 12-stroke victory over second-place Tufts. Jacob Zeng led the way on Sunday with a 72 (three birdies) and finished the tournament fifth overall for individuals. Senior captain McKeon said that he felt comfortable with the lead on Sunday, allowing them to build upon the strong Saturday round and close out the championship: "The team's goal heading into Sunday was to play to win, rather than simply holding onto the lead. We all had a few shots in the first round that we wanted back, and Sunday gave us that chance to improve. I actually had no idea until the 11th hole, but by the time we reached the back nine, the lead had widened a little more, which gave us the chance to loosen up and have some fun out there."

PHOTO COURTESY OF JOSH MCKEE

Billy Geach '23, Hamilton's top performer at the tournament, placed third among the entire NESCAC with a score of 147.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JOSH MCKEE

The Hamilton men's golf team placed first in the ten-team NESCAC tournament at the Yahnundasis Golf Club.

McKeon's rounds of 74 put him in fourth place overall on the individual leaderboard, one stroke behind his teammate Geach, who finished on the podium in third. Between Geach, McKeon, Zeng and first-year Whittaker, each of the four scorers finished in the top-nine overall, a tremendous display of depth and consistency that made them nearly impossible to take down this weekend.

McKeon also commended the team's perseverance throughout the entire year. "We have a very resilient team, and I think those qualities helped us get to where we are now. Coming off a six-month break between tournaments is always tough, but we continued to work throughout the offseason which allowed us to come out sharp in April. From there, we continued to find ways to improve despite some tough weather and canceled tournaments. The grit we showed in those weeks prepared us nicely for the championship."

With this win, the team qualifies for the four-round Division III National Championships at Mission Inn Resort and Club in Howey-in-the-Hills, Florida. Looking forward to the team's trip into relatively uncharted territory, McKeon said, "Nationals is obviously a lot different from NESCACs, but the team goal stays the same. If we go out there and play our game, I think we can be competitive with anyone. No matter the result though, nationals is a great experience and will hopefully be a lot of fun for the team."

The National Championships will run from May 10 to 13 and will feature 43 teams from across the nation. With the team's depth from positions one through five, there is no reason to believe they will not make a push for the team title. For now, McKeon and the team will celebrate the victory, "I couldn't have asked for a better ending to my time on the team. We've had some very deep and talented teams throughout the years, and it feels great to finally break through and win the conference for the guys both past and present."

Opinion: ambivalence on the Wimbledon ban on Russian and Belorussian players

by Owen Lewis '24
SPORTS EDITOR

A couple weeks ago, Wimbledon, one of the four biggest tournaments in tennis, announced that in the interest of preventing the Russian regime from benefiting from the event, all Russian and Belarusian players would be denied entry. As in: not allowed to play because of their nationality. My gut reaction when the news came out was anger. Russian and Belarusian players were being punished for doing nothing wrong. Ukrainian players were demanding that Russian and Belarusian players publicly speak up against Putin and the war, and while I agreed with the sentiment of just wanting the war to end, I feared that such a public denouncement could potentially result in the players and/or their families being harmed, given that they are essentially living under a dictator.

Some of these views have stuck with me, but this is an incredibly complex situation in which many things are simultaneously true. Yes, Russian and Belarusian tennis players have done nothing wrong, but there is a war going on. If Putin truly could benefit from a Russian champion at Wimbledon—and Putin has been buoyed by sporting success in the past; his approval ratings soared after Sochi hosted the 2014 Olympics—why give the opportunity? As Sally Jenkins writes in the *Washington Post*, Putin was flanked by athletes as he held a pro-war rally at Moscow Stadium in March. At the same time, does the huge injustice of the war make the smaller injustice of banning players from Wimbledon based on their nationality okay, or at the least abidable? This is a dangerous precedent to set.

Despite legitimate practical reasons for this ban, there is an undeniably icky feeling to it. Aryna Sabalenka made the Wimbledon semifinals last year and nearly got through to the final. She is Belarusian, so she will not be allowed to play this year. Daniil Medvedev has reached the coveted world number one ranking this year, and though he has since fallen to #2, a good showing at Wimbledon could help him reclaim it. He is Russian, so he will not be allowed to play. It is indisputably unfair. Jenkins' piece in the *Washington Post* went on to express some iffy viewpoints: that citizens bore some responsibility for the actions of their state, that "if ATP officials have an issue over fairness, it's not with Wimbledon. They should take it up with Putin," and that "Russia—not just Putin—is destroying Ukraine, so the response can't be limited to Putin while exempting the citizenry." As if the Russian dictator is taking advice from tennis players. More moderate responses to the war have also been suggested. Russian and Belarusian players could compete under a blank flag, for instance, or Wimbledon could donate a portion of its proceeds to humanitarian causes.

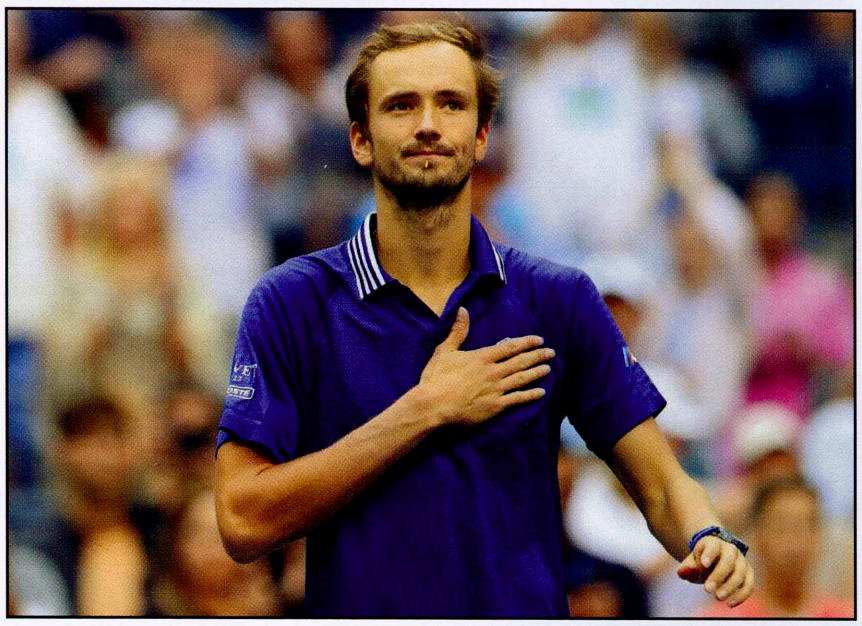


PHOTO COURTESY OF ELSA/GETTY IMAGES

Daniil Medvedev, the second-ranked player in the world, will not be allowed to take part in the Wimbledon Championships.

PHOTO COURTESY OF WIMBLEDON

Wimbledon, one of tennis's four major tournaments, has announced a controversial ban on Russian and Belorussian players.

All that said, the biggest atrocity here is the ongoing war on Ukraine. When Ukrainian tennis players throw their support behind the Wimbledon decision or demand that their Russian peers denounce Putin, it feels wrong to criticize them because they and their families are going through hell right now. Former Ukrainian tennis players Sergiy Stakhovsky and Alexandr Dolgopolov even joined the war effort, saying they were willing to fight. "Maybe I'll be killed, maybe I have to kill," Dolgopolov said in March. I am so far removed from being in that position that I do not feel at all qualified to disagree with them. At the very least, they clearly have the right to feel the way they do.

I have concluded, at least for now, that both being in favor of the ban and being against it are viable viewpoints. This is a no-win situation. A bad thing with potentially bad ramifications is happening in the hopes of helping end a really bad thing. Whatever ends up happening—there is talk of a potential boycott, and there are things that would shock me more than Wimbledon changing its tune before the tournament, which is still months away—a group of people will come away feeling angry or hurt. I love tennis and look forward to Wimbledon every year, but with the war still raging, dwelling on this issue is missing the forest for the trees. Perhaps the only positive to come out of this episode is a reminder to have perspective.